



# California Planning Roundtable

## **CPR ORAL HISTORY PROJECT DESCRIPTION (aka How Planning Affects People)**

### **Why?**

The vision of the California Planning Roundtable (CPR) is to advance planning practice and influence policy through innovation and leadership to create healthy, prosperous and equitable communities.

CPR is a known resource for policy exploration, innovation and development for California planning to enhance the sustainability, equity and livability of California communities. CPR focuses on emerging policy issues with cutting edge solutions.

With the concept of systemic discrimination becoming significantly more prominent in the public dialogue, and, in particular, how the planning practice has contributed to systemic discrimination and, conversely, helped integrate communities, CPR is well positioned to advance the dialogue and help improve understanding among California planners.

For planners to effectively serve the community, planning policies and practices need to be focused on addressing the needs and experiences of community members. Planners can often approach planning from a very academic perspective, which can be detached from those needs and experiences. The goal of this project is to help bridge the gap between academic planning concepts and the people-centered experiences that planning policies shape, and to inform the practice of planning for better outcomes.

### **What?**

The desired end product is a series of video recordings of personal interviews that provides a broader understanding of, and changes the narrative around, systemic discrimination. The project would give laypersons (non-planners) an opportunity to voice their thoughts on how planning, directly or indirectly, has affected them and their neighborhoods. The videos would include discussions and interviews with non-planners to shed light on the following issues:

- How have people experienced systemic discrimination?
- How have planning decisions contributed to systemic discrimination?
- How have planning decisions helped mitigate systemic discrimination?
- What can/should planners do differently/better to understand the perspectives of local community members that experience systemic discrimination resulting from planning policies?

Interview questions will be developed as part of the project. A total of eight to 12 interviews are anticipated, representing a diversity of issues and stories.

The results of the interviews would be compiled into a video (or videos) along with a foreword and a call to action. Dissemination of the videos would include postings on social media platforms, placement in various planning archives, websites, conference sessions, and possibly CPR-sponsored podcasts.

### **How?**

This must be a people-centered approach to understand personal experiences so that planners can better understand the problem before identifying solutions. The intent is to develop a process that enables positive engagement between non-planners and planners.

Personal experiences will be documented through a series of interviews (and potentially focus groups) with non-planners. The individuals conducting the interviews will be experienced members of CPR.

The actual questions to be posed in the interviews will be carefully structured, in plain language, to root the discussions in notions of equity while also avoiding bias and jargon. Interviews will be designed with careful attention to seeding the discussions neutrally and to recognize the rich social networks in communities, allowing participants to share what they know or like about their own neighborhoods as well as challenges and concerns.

Potential interviewees will be selected through a process that identifies individuals representing California's diversity: geographically, ethnically, and economically. Sources to help identify interviewees may include, but not be limited to, CPR member recommendations, and databases such as the Bay Area Equity Atlas and National Equity Atlas. (Interviewees could be members of the same family to identify different generational perspectives.)

A pre-interview survey/questionnaire will be developed and administered prior to the interviews in an effort to identify potential common issues of concern and challenges experienced by the interviewees.

Two paid graduate-level interns from journalism, history, urban planning, film-making or related fields, under the guidance of a CPR advisor, will assist in developing a more detailed scope of work for the project, assisting in selecting interviewees, developing a pre-interview questionnaire, developing story boards or scripts, assisting in video creation and editing, and managing logistics. CPR will review and approve recommendations developed by the interns, before moving forward.

### **Completion Date**

Estimated completion date of the project is December 31, 2021.

---